

Congressman Pence's remarks for the American Energy Solutions Group (AESG) energy summit in Indianapolis today, as prepared for delivery:

"Indiana is home to a tremendous amount of manufacturing, and states in the Midwest get the majority of their electricity from coal. Over 90% of the power generated in Indiana comes from coal-fired power plants. Hoosiers care as much about a clean environment as other Americans, but Hoosiers are also worried about the economy, their jobs, and their family budgets. Energy policy made in Washington will affect each and every Hoosier, so I am pleased to be here today to hear directly from Hoosiers and I commit to taking their message back to Washington.

"I am honored to be joined by Rep. Dan Burton, representing the 5th Congressional District of Indiana and parts of the greater Indianapolis area. Rep. Steve Buyer, is also here today. He represents the 4th District of Indiana, covering much of central and western Indiana. We are very pleased to have with us Rep. Fred Upton, co-chair of the American Energy Solutions Group, of Michigan, and Rep. Bob Latta of Ohio. Unfortunately, Rep. Mark Souder could not be here today, but I know that he has sent his staff, and we are grateful for that. Reps. Upton and Buyer both serve on the Energy & Commerce Committee in Congress, and I suspect they will have plenty to say about the committee's activities on energy in the last few weeks.

"The American Energy Solutions Group is a group of House Republicans working to craft legislative solutions that will lower energy prices for American families and small businesses and create energy independence for the American people. A few weeks ago, the Solutions Group held a summit very similar to this in Washington, DC, and heard from people who represent millions of Americans from around the nation on the subject of the Waxman-Markey cap and tax bill.

"Yesterday we held an energy summit in Pittsburgh, and tomorrow, we will hold our final summit on energy in San Luis Obispo, California. We are taking advantage of this Congressional District Work Period to criss-cross the nation and engage in a conversation with the American people about energy. I truly believe the best ideas in America do not come from Washington, DC, but come from places like Indianapolis, and that is why we are here today.

"We are honored to have a great panel of academics, industry representatives, and energy experts with us to share their expertise and insight. We are also very honored to have the Governor of Indiana, Gov. Mitch Daniels, here to discuss the effects of cap-and-tax on the Hoosier state in particular. This summit is intended to be a discussion about not only the economic impacts of the national energy tax proposed in the Waxman-Markey legislation, but also the future of coal and other sources of energy. It is my hope that we can leave here better armed with information and ideas so that Republicans can craft common-sense legislative solutions that will lower energy costs, increase supply, create jobs, and provide energy independence for the American people.

"We are here this morning during a difficult time in the life of our nation. Our economy is in a deep recession. We have witnessed the loss of more than 5 million jobs, trillions of dollars of retirement savings, and the closing of thousands of small businesses across our great nation. In this great state of Indiana, families are experiencing a painful 10 percent unemployment rate. Unfortunately, as our nation's hard-working families struggle to overcome these hardships, some in Washington are pushing a drastic new energy plan which will force a national energy tax on already burdened taxpayers. There is no doubt that the Democrats' misguided bill will kill jobs, raise taxes and lead to more government intrusion.

"This national energy tax is an irresponsible proposal that will do more harm than good. If a cap-and-tax bill becomes law, estimates suggest that household energy costs could rise by an average of \$3100, or by even \$4,300 according to a recent Heritage Foundation study of the Waxman-Markey bill. And those hardest hit by this massive national energy tax will be the poor - who experts agree spend a greater proportion of their income on energy consumption.

"To make matters worse, a devastating consequence of the Democrats' legislation will be fewer jobs for hard-working Americans. Various studies suggest anywhere from 1.8 to 7 million jobs could be lost. At a time when our nation's economy is suffering, the last thing Congress should do is support legislation that will cause job loss.

"This energy tax will not be borne evenly across the United States. According to a study that ranks Congressional districts based on their manufacturing employment and amount of electricity derived from coal, the Midwest and Southeast will suffer the most. In fact, 8 of the 9 Congressional districts in Indiana rank in the top 20 districts hardest hit by cap-and-tax, and Indiana is ranked as the hardest hit State nationwide.

"The reality is the cap and tax legislation offered by the Democrats amounts to an economic declaration of war on the Midwest by liberals on Capitol Hill.

"Let me be clear. Republicans want to protect our environment, and believe we can do so while at the same time growing our economy and protecting jobs. Republicans believe we can increase American energy production made by American workers, encourage greater efficiency and conservation, and promote the use of alternative fuels without enacting a national energy tax.

"We look forward to hearing from our witnesses today, and I am confident that in the coming weeks Republicans will be able to take these ideas and offer an energy plan that will lead America to energy independence and a cleaner environment."

NOTE:

The AESG will be hosting several summits across the country this week in order to develop policy initiatives to lower energy prices for American families and small businesses, and create energy independence for the American people